

Town of Wenham
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of Tuesday, April 25, 2006 ~7:30 p.m.
Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

APPROVED BY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AT THEIR MEETING OF

May 2, 2006

Present: Tom Tanous, Chair; Peter Hersee; Don Pickard

Also Present: Jeff Chelgren, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Secretary

Mr. Tanous opened the meeting at 7:32 p.m. and briefly identified the agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Town Meeting – Related Meeting Dates

Mr. Pickard announced the following important meeting dates:

April 27th -Budget Forum Meeting – Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

May 1st - Warrant Hearing - Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

May 2nd - Selectmen Meeting - Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

May 3rd -Town Hall & Police Station Project Public Forum - Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

May 6th -Annual Town Meeting and Annual Elections - Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

May 9th -Selectmen Meeting – Recreation Building

May 23rd - Selectmen Meeting - Bessie Buker Multi Media Room

Mr. Tanous said that the Town Reports and Annual Town Meeting Warrant Book were delivered to each household on April 20th and 21st. Both contain useful information for voters in preparation for the May 6th Annual Town Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Annual Town Meeting Warrant – Review & Positions

Mr. Chelgren told the Selectmen that Article 12 is still being reviewed by Town Counsel and at his recommendation the Selectmen took no action at this time.

Mr. Tanous read through the warrant and briefly explained each article, noting the first four articles concern standard municipal town business.

Article 5-Operating Budget- Regional School District

Mr. Hersee stated that the School Budget Override is \$91,082 and explained some of the reasons for the override. He also recognized the work by the School Committee that went into the budget to keep the override amount down. He added that the School Committee, along with the two towns will host a Budget Forum on Thursday, April 27th in the Bessie Buker Media Room at 7 p.m.

Article 6-CPA Appropriations

Mr. Pickard said that the Community Preservation Committee is recommending the support of four of the applications received for Community Preservation Act Funds; Pedestrian & Bike Safety Path; Baseball field improvements at Patton Park, in partnership with the Town of Hamilton and the Joint Recreation Department; The rehabilitation of the town hall building; Surveying at Pleasant Pond recreation area for a master plan.

Mr. Chelgren reiterated that the use of CPA funds for the rehabilitation of town hall will pay the first year of principal & interest on a \$2.151 million dollar bond that is contained in Article 7 with a ballot vote at the May 11th elections.

Article 7-Town Hall/Police Station Additional Funding Request

Mr. Tanous stated that additional funding must be presented as a debt exclusion in conjunction with Article 6(CPA funds), explaining if the money in Article 6 becomes unavailable, then Article 7 will become active.

Article 8- To Level the tax rate.

Article 9-Community Preservation Act Amendment- Legislative Petition

Mr. Pickard said that this pertains to the CPA tax on The Maples which currently receives a single \$100,000 deduction from the cooperative tax bill as a whole. Mr. Pickard identified that this petition if passed amendment will allow each of the 55 units to receive the \$100,000 deduction.

Mr. Chelgren noted that the annual financial impact to the town is \$1,814.

Article 10-Call Firefighters Survivor Benefits – Legislative Petition

Mr. Tanous spoke briefly about Article 10 saying that this will allow families of fallen or permanently disabled firefighters to participate in the town's health insurance plan benefits in the same way retired employees do.

Article 11-Cable Television Non-profit Corporation Authorization

Mr. Hersee read the article and explained that this allows Hamilton and Wenham to create a non profit organization for local public cable access and to administer public programming.

Mr. Chelgren added that legal documents are being prepared and that a public forum will be scheduled to review and possibly approve these documents.

Article 12 – Water Resource Protection, Enforcement and Penalties

Mr. Tanous identified that Article 12 is an amendment to the current bylaws at the request of the Conservation Commission to establish non criminal violations and associated penalties up to \$300 per day upon citation of violation of wetlands by the conservation commission or it's agent.

Article 13-Board of Health Mutual Aid Agreement

Mr. Tanous said that this article allows the BOH to enter into inter-municipal agreements with other government agencies. Mr. Tanous read the article submitted by the BOH and noted that this collaboration will provide a cost savings to the town.

Article 14 – Liquor License Authorization – Legislative Petition

Mr. Hersee identified that this will authorize the Selectmen to petition the General Court for four full liquor licenses and ten, one-day liquor licenses, adding that the BOS is recommending approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Annual Appointments-Preliminary review of Annual Appointment List (vote not required until May 16th)

Mr. Hersee said that annual appointments for all town committees, board members and certain officers in town must be done in May. He asked that those who no longer wish to continue to serve notify the Town Administrator's office as soon as possible.

The BOS will be acting on the appointments, May 23rd.

Salary Survey – Fire, Police, & Library

Insurance Advisory Committee – Status Report

Mr. Chelgren reported to the BOS that the Insurance Advisory Committee is preparing a draft report and recommendation for the BOS, which should be ready in 4-5 weeks. He requested authorization to begin discussions with the impacted unions, specifically the Police Union, that is waiting specifically for this information.

He noted the law requires the BOS appoint an Insurance Advisory Committee of town employees when considering changes to the insurance benefits.

He briefly reviewed some of the Insurance Advisory Committee considerations:

- Changes of health insurance provider from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to Harvard Pilgrim (other companies were considered)

- Contribution changes of the Town from the current 80% /20%, employee

- Co-pay adjustments for prescriptions, doctor, and emergency room visits

Mr. Chelgren briefly reviewed the general cost savings for the Town and the employees with the possible suggested changes and the extensive cost increase if no amendments are made.

He noted that all scenarios have been considered by the committee but because they are projected numbers the costs are always changing.

Mr. Chelgren said that he would like to talk with the Unions at this time with the understanding that before any action is taken the Unions will have to agree with the terms, adding that each Union has a representative on the Insurance Committee.

Mr. Tanous suggested, and it was agreed, that the Town Administrator wait until the BOS has the complete recommended package before he talks to the Unions.

Regarding the salary survey that the BOS asked him to put together, Mr. Chelgren said that most towns are preparing for their annual town meetings and have not completed the survey; however he has received information regarding fire and police departments and the libraries.

Fire Union Contract – Sign

Mr. Pickard identified that the town and the Wenham call firefighters have negotiated a contract for the period July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2008, saying that both Labor Counsel and the Firefighters Association have reviewed and approved the contract and an officer of the Union has signed the contract.

Mr. Pickard moved that the BOS sign the collective bargaining agreement for the Firefighters Association from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2008. Mr. Hersee seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Tanous signed the contract for the Selectmen.

Pleasant Pond Neighborhood Association

Mr. Chelgren told the Selectmen that the PPNA is preparing to clean up the beach for summer operation and has requested that traffic/parking signs be put in place. Mr. Chelgren said the Police Chief has reviewed the requested signs and noted that the town does not have jurisdiction to put signs up along the dirt road before the beach but that some of the other signs can be posted.

Mr. Hersee moved to approve the list of signs as recommended. Mr. Pickard seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

REPORTS

Wenham Issues:

Memorial Day Plans Update – Mr. Hersee said that the Town will celebrate Memorial Day on May 29th and identified various participants for the parade and services.

Mr. Chelgren announced an open house at the CATV studio for all town boards and committees on May 24th.

Mr. Tanous stated that the School District Annual Report is out and encouraged residents to read through it.

MINUTES

Mr. Hersee moved to accept the Selectmen meeting minutes of April 18, 2006, with edits as indicated. Mr. Pickard seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

8:26 p.m. *Mr. Hersee moved to adjourn and it was unanimous to do so.*